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The Hourglass Pattern of Women's Representation

Women's descriptive underrepresentation in parliaments is traditionally presented as the result of a process that discards women as they move up the ladder of recruitment. In this article, the case of Denmark is used to demonstrate an alternative hourglass pattern where women's presence does decrease in the early phases but increase in the later phases. There are fewer women among party members than among party voters, and fewer women among potential candidates than among party members. However, there is a higher share of women among nominated candidates than among potential candidates, and women are more likely than men to get elected. This hourglass pattern is found at the aggregate level as well as for political party and over time. There are two implications of this finding: 1) the traditional pyramidal pattern cannot be taken for granted, and 2) in countries where women's representation follows an hourglass shape, scholars and advocates alike should focus on membership recruitment by political parties and on internal party processes that aim to develop party members' willingness to run for political office prior to the formal nomination process.

Introduction[1]

Recent gains aside, women continue to be systematically underrepresented in political assemblies around the globe. Women are increasingly gaining access to men-only domains in the upper echelons of society, but they still have quite a way to go before reaching parity in political life. The most recent figures report that only 23.5 percent of parliamentary seats worldwide are held by women (Inter-Parliamentary Union 2018), and despite some improvements regarding gender equality, activists, pundits and scholars are still asking "why so few and why so slow?" (Christmas-Best and Kjaer 2007).

Part of the normative discussion on how to achieve equality among men and women in political assemblies centers on whether women in politics should be seen primarily as an end-point or as a starting point in the struggle for gender equality. According to the former position, women will achieve equal representation in parliaments only after societal gender inequalities (in families, educational systems, workplaces, cultural life etc.) have been eradicated. According to the latter position, women should try to conquer seats in parliament first and then exploit their parliamentary presence to promote legislation aimed at more gender-equal societies. The two positions have become the focal point of the gender quota debate (Krook 2006), which opposes a traditional incremental strategy and a fast-track strategy based on quota systems (Dahlerup and Freidenvall 2005).

The descriptive equivalent to this normative discussion is *where* in the political recruitment process women eventually make progress. The recruitment process consists of different phases, i.e. mobilization, nomination and election (Norris and Lovenduski 1995). Each phase represents a step upwards in the political hierarchy, and the closer to the top, the more the pool of people is reduced. Norris and Lovenduski include five groups in their recruitment ladder, namely voters, party members, applicants, candidates and MPs (1995, 16). At each stage, fewer continue to the next stage, that is, decide to begin (or renew) party membership, express willingness to run for national election, be nominated as candidate, and be elected as MP, respectively.

[1] We would like to thank the three anonymous reviewers for very constructive and useful comments, Asmus Harre for excellent research assistance, the Danish research council (FSE) for funding the party member survey of 2012, and colleagues commenting on previous drafts, in particular participants at the workshop "The Causes and Consequences of Male Overrepresentation" at the ECPR Joint Session of Workshops, Warsaw, March-April 2015; at Danish Political Science Association's meeting, Kolding, October 2015, and at Midwest Political Science Association, Chicago, April 2016.

In a bottom-up perspective, gender inequality is an embedded mechanism in political recruitment, and therefore women's underrepresentation in the earlier phases will only be amplified throughout the process. A "the higher, the fewer pattern" will emerge (Bashevkin 1993), and the earlier phases will be critical for women's success in the final phase of the recruitment process, i.e., the parliamentary elections. In a top-down perspective, the gendered bias in the earlier phases cannot simply be extrapolated into the latter phases. Instead, the mechanisms that affect the gender composition can change sign as women move up the recruitment ladder. In other words, the influence on women's representation in parliament in later phases may be more disconnected from influence in the earlier phases than assumed from a more deterministic bottom-up perspective. "The higher, the fewer pattern" might be broken along the way. This is obviously true in countries with quota systems, where the later phases are manipulated to break the traditional pattern and improve women's representation. What about non-quota countries? The societal norms on gender equal representation in parliaments can change in favor of women before more profound changes in gender inequalities in, for instance, work and family life have materialized. This is indicated by empirical evidence that voters are not hostile to women at the polls (Seltzer, Newman, and Leighton 1997, 92; Lawless, Fox, and Baitinger 2014, 29). We pursue these hints further and suggest an alternative to the "the higher, the fewer", or pyramidal, pattern that is traditionally used to depict women's representation as they move up the ladder of recruitment. We argue that an hourglass-shaped pattern emerges when the societal norms on women's political representation overtake the more general level of gender equality in a society. We argue why this pattern may exist and demonstrate its existence based on the case of Denmark and thereby supplement the current model for women's success at different stages in the political recruitment process. Our point is that it is important to not lock into a "the higher, the fewer pattern" a priori.

In the next part of the article, we elaborate on the recruitment process and argue for the hourglass pattern of women's representation. We introduce the Danish case and data in more detail and present the empirical results of the hourglass pattern at the aggregate level, across parties and across time. In addition, we briefly demonstrate that the reluctance to run among female party members, the thinnest part of the hourglass, is due to gender rather than a distribution effect (Niven 1998). In the concluding part, we argue that the observation of an hourglass pattern in Denmark should lead to more comparative research on the gendered ladder of recruitment making advocates of gender equality able to target their endeavors for more women in parliament to the phases of the recruitment process most important in the specific context. In countries with an hourglass pattern,

such as Denmark, the implication of the finding is that advocates for gender equality should focus on getting more women to become party members and getting more female party members to develop a taste for political office.

The hourglass pattern of women's representation

Norris and Lovenduski (1995) insisted on including as many steps in the recruitment ladder as possible, which meant a renewed focus on the political parties (see also Lovenduski (2016)). Political parties play an important – often *the* most important – role in the political recruitment game (Schlesinger 1991; Caul 1999; Sanbonmatsu 2010; Hazan & Rahat 2010; Hinojosa 2012), so it seems obvious to include party-internal steps. From public records, we know the gender distribution of the electorate and MPs and often also of the pool of candidates. However, moving up the ladder of recruitment by going directly from the electorate to the official ballots is not very nuanced and definitely not sensitive to the internal processes in the political parties and "the secret garden of politics" (Gallagher and Marsh 1988).

As stated, it is a well-established wisdom in studies of women and politics that women are eliminated in all phases in the recruitment process. The closer we got to the top of the political hierarchy, the fewer women we would find, relatively speaking. According to the idea of minority attrition (Taagepera 1994), the *absolute* number of people who "survive" each phase decreases as we climb the political ladder of recruitment and so does the *relative* number of people from groups that are not normally equally included in the political elite. As Putnam put it: "The disproportionate advantage of male … elite recruits increases as we move up the political stratification system" (1976, 33). "The higher, the fewer pattern" (Bashevkin 1993) has also been denoted "the law of increasing disproportion" (Putnam 1976, 33), or "the law of minority attrition" (Taagepera 1994). Taagepera demonstrated a pyramidal pattern by stacking bars – the length of each bar representing the percentage of women in the groups of voters, party members, aspirants, candidates and MPs – according to the ladder of political recruitment (1994, 243). As pointed out in the introduction, we argue that an hourglass pattern is also likely to occur in political contexts with focus on gender equality. Below, we discuss the expected changes in women's representation in each phase based on the hourglass pattern.

Starting at the bottom of the recruitment ladder, there is gender parity among people and citizens, that is, eligible voters. However, already in the first phase of the recruitment process, women tend to lose ground. Party membership studies show that women are less likely to enroll in political parties; in average, they make up only a third of party members (van Haute and Gauja 2015). In general, party members make up the pool from which parties recruit candidates (Sanbonmatsu 2010).

At the next step, the question is which party members are aspirants who are interested in being nominated as candidates. Norris and Lovenduski's (1995) original data on party members' ambitions has not been used much (Lovenduski 2016, 521). However, other studies show that political ambition is of major importance in terms of explaining who becomes a political candidate (Schlesinger 1991; Dittmar 2015; Galais, Öhberg, and Coller 2016); that political ambitions are gendered (Lawless and Fox 2010); and that they may be explained by, for example, political socialization and family dynamics (Galais, Öhberg, and Coller 2016) and larger "election aversion" among women than among men (Kanthak and Woon 2014, 596). However, individual characteristics alone do not explain the aspiration to stand for election. We also have to look at parties' "demand" for candidates and their feedback mechanisms (Verge 2015). For example, parties may encourage potential aspirants, and this is the most important facilitator of candidacy, in particular for women (Lawless and Fox 2010; Dittmar 2015). The extent to which members come forward as candidates is determined by the interaction between individuals and parties.

This leads us to the third phase: the parties' nomination of candidates. Studies of candidate nomination have focused on formal rules (Katz & Mair 1992; Bille 2001), how the selectorate and the degree of centralization-decentralization affect the composition of the candidate lists (Hazan and Rahat 2010; Fortin-Rittberger and Rittberger 2015; Luhiste 2015), and, more recently, on what really goes on in the "smoke-filled backrooms," especially how informal practices diverge from and interact with formal rules (e.g. Hinojosa 2012; Bjarnegård and Zetterberg 2016a and 2016b; Hennings and Urbatsch 2016; Kelbel 2018). Some studies find that political parties are gendered in a way that sets higher barriers for women than for men (e.g. Verge 2015; Lovenduski 2016; Bjarnegård and Kenny 2016).

However, formal rules as well as informal practices can also discriminate positively towards women leading to an increase in women's representation in the nomination phase, in line with the hourglass pattern. Intraparty gender quotas can have an effect on the gender balance (Franceschet, Krook and

Piscopo 2012; Verge and Espírito-Santo 2016), but also in non-quota contexts, norms about good candidates can affect the gender composition positively (Pedersen 2003; Reiser 2014). In women-friendly contexts at the system level, and in parties with gender parity as political goal, parties' and voters' demand for women may be higher than the supply, and the hourglass model will manifest itself. In this case, parties are both barriers and enablers. If they pursue a deliberative strategy to present a heterogeneous list of candidates to the voters, female aspirants as well as other minorities of concern for the parties and/or its voters are more likely to become candidates than male aspirants. Parties' selectorates, i.e. formal and informal party gatekeepers, may seek to compensate for a gender-skewed pipeline. To circumvent women's lower political ambitions, readiness to compete etc. they may either cultivate women who come forward or positively discriminate women (and possibly other minorities) in the nomination process.

Why would parties pursue such a strategy if not required by quota regulation? The response is a combination of party ideology or policy, party membership and electoral support. If party ideology as manifested in the program and policy proposals promote gender equality, parties will pursue gender equality because they believe in it and possibly to avoid being labelled as hypocritical. Parties themselves want to "walk the talk" of their own policies. As is commonly argued in studies of cross-party variation, leftwing parties are expected to be more focused on gender equality due to their leftwing ideology (Siaroff 2000; Christmas-Best and Kjaer 2007).

In the fourth and final phase of the recruitment process, we enter the electoral arena. Formally, voters decide who is elected, but depending on the electoral systems, parties may have quite a say as well. In first past the post elections, parties have a high degree of influence on whether candidates are nominated in an unwinnable seat, a marginal seat or a safe seat (cf. Lovenduski 2016). In proportional electoral systems, parties have a much larger say in the election of parliamentarians with party lists, whereas open lists give voters larger influence as they allow for preferential voting. Multimember electoral districts and multiparty systems enable voters to choose a woman without having to compromise on their partisanship. The degree of party control may both promote and hinder gender parity. Parties' gatekeepers have a strategic interest in being responsive to the electorate. Parties whose (potential) voters reward women in the electoral stage have a strategic interest in including women on the candidate lists, while the opposite is the case in parties whose voters punish women electorally.

Traditionally, the electoral phase has been seen as hurting women's representation (Huddy and Terkildsen 1993; Rosenwasser and Dean 1989; Crowder-Meyer 2013), which supports the perception of a pyramidal pattern. Other studies find that women do just as well as men in the electoral phase (Seltzer, Newman, and Leighton 1997, 92; Lawless, Fox, and Baitinger 2014, 29; Dolan and Lynch 2016; Fulton 2014), which opens up for alternatives such as the hourglass pattern. Women's representation may increase if, for instance, voters have a positive view on female candidates or if women make up for the identified electoral disadvantage by being more skilled and competent than men (McElroy and Marsh 2010; Fulton 2012; 2014; Anzia and Berry 2011).

Parties weight gender equality policies and gendered electoral support differently, and the aggregate degree of gender parity in any legislative assembly therefore depends on which parties are elected. Some parties have more women elected than others (Caul 1999; Chiva 2014; Luhiste and Kenny 2016). The acceptable level of gender imbalance is, beyond a certain minimum, expected to vary across parties (and countries). Parties with close to gender parity among their party members are expected to have relatively larger gender parity among their aspirants and therefore less need to positively discriminate women. On the other hand, parties with a smaller share of women may nevertheless want at least some women on their lists and hence, to a relatively larger extent, favor women. The broader the base, the smaller the difference between the levels, and vice versa. In addition, size or funding may matter; well-off parties may handle the costs of nominating women better (Bjarnegård and Zetterberg 2016a).

In sum, our proposed hourglass model of political recruitment depicts that there are fewer female party members than female voters. This gender gap is enlarged at the level of aspirants but is reduced at the next step due to a desire among parties in "women-friendly systems" to provide a heterogeneous, and more gender-balanced, list of candidates. Furthermore, when voters are not forced to compromise their partisanship, they are able to reward women, whereby the gender gap narrows a little more at the level of MPs.

Method and Data

To demonstrate the hourglass pattern, we have selected a country with a relatively high representation of women in parliament that cannot be attributed to a quota system. Furthermore, since women's underrepresentation according to the hourglass pattern emerges in the part of the

recruitment process where voters decide to join a political party and where party members become willing to run for office, it is important to have data on this part of the process.

We have chosen Denmark as our case to illustrate the hourglass pattern. Large party member surveys conducted in 2000 and 2012 allow us to make comparisons across parties and time. We can also analyze whether the drop in the share of female party members who are willing to run is explained by gender and not "just" by a distribution effect (Niven 1998). We demonstrate a combination of positive discrimination towards women in the nomination and electoral phases – as in the hourglass pattern – in a context where women's route into the pool of aspirants among party members is still narrower than the route for their male counterparts.

The purpose of this section is to form the methodological basis for the analysis of whether the share of women at the five steps of the recruitment ladder form an hourglass both at the aggregate and party levels. We first present the Danish case, then the data applied in the analyses, and thirdly, we operationalize the five layers of the hourglass model.

The Danish Case

Denmark, along with the other Scandinavian countries, provide a women-friendly environment. Scandinavian women are, in general well integrated in the political system compared to women in many other countries. They take up a substantial share of parliamentary seats, ministerial posts, party leader positions and even (in 2011-2015) the position of Prime Minister (Heidar and Pedersen 2006).

Denmark has a proportional electoral system, and women tend to do better in these systems than in first past the post electoral systems (Paxton 1997; Fortin-Rittberger and Rittberger 2014). In proportional systems, each candidate is one among several, and women are not singled out and therefore not as risky a nomination to the parties. The 61/39 men-women split in parliament at the time of this research placed Denmark 13th across the world (www.ipu.org). Hence, there is a relatively high representation of women and an ample number of women role models.

Even though Scandinavia as such is seen as a region with particularly strong focus on gender equality (Paxton 1997, 455), Danish parties have a lower level of gender awareness than Swedish (and Norwegian) parties (Folke and Rickne 2016). Formal gender quotas are absent in Denmark, and there is very limited formalization of female representation in party organizations in the form of

women's organizations. There is no long tradition for female party leaders even though women led four of the nine parties at the time of our study. The "passion for equality" is not institutionalized in the Danish case (Pruysers, Cross, Gauja, and Rahat 2017, 219).

Denmark' multiparty system allows us to test the hourglass model on a large number of parties within a similar context. Parties are key in the process of candidate nomination in Denmark (Kjaer and Pedersen 2004). Candidates are recruited through parties, particularly through membership organizations, since candidates need to be party members. It is not possible to bypass parties for election to the national parliament.

As argued above, the selectorate matters to political recruitment (Hazan and Rahat 2010). In almost all parties, candidates are recruited and nominated by the local party branches. Party statutes grant party members the right to decide, typically at the annual meeting in their local branch, whom to nominate for national elections in the 102 nominating districts. The exceptions are Liberal Alliance, where candidates are nominated at the level of the ten electoral districts, and the Red-Green Alliance, where the top-10 candidates are chosen at the national congress. This party-centered system is, unlike a candidate-centered with focus on personal votes, advantageous for women candidates (Thames and Williams 2010). Candidates may campaign on the party ticket and not only on their personal characteristics. Personal votes matter, but party votes may determine the election. Party organizations limit the impact of personal wealth on campaigning by providing resources such as expertise and other resources for candidates.

Data

Register data on the population, turnout, candidates and elected representatives provides information for the first and last part of the recruitment ladder and is readily available in Denmark. We usually know less about the steps from voter to candidate, that is, the intraparty process from eligible to aspirant and candidate. But thanks to a party-member survey that included questions on gender, willingness to stand for election and other relevant characteristics, it is possible to analyze gender gaps at all five steps on the ladder of recruitment in Danish politics. In other words, we can analyze the parts of the nomination process that are "frequently withheld from researchers by political parties" (Lovenduski 2016, 520).

The online survey was conducted in April 2012 among party members from all nine Danish parties that ran in the general election in September 2011. From left to right on the traditional left-right

dimension: Red-Green Alliance (EL), Socialist People's Party (SF), Social Democrats (S), Social Liberals (RV), The Christian Democrats (KD), Liberals (V), Danish People's Party (DF), Conservatives People's Party (KF), and Liberal Alliance (LA). All parties vary in age, membership size, electoral size and ideological placement. A total of 16,871 members responded to all questions (response rate 26.8 percent). For more on this and the similar survey in 2000, see Appendix, Table A.1.

Operationalization

Whereas voters, candidates and members of parliaments are easily operationalized on the basis of the national election study (Stubager, Hansen, and Andersen 2013) and official statistics on turnout, candidates and elected MPs (www.valg.oim.dk), a few words will follow on party members and aspirants.

Party statutes define party members. Danish membership criteria – paying fees, adhering to party principles and refraining from joining other parties – are similar to the criteria of other party member organizations (Kosiara-Pedersen 2015; van Haute and Gauja 2015). Parties' membership files form the basis of the party member survey.

In the survey, party members were asked whether they would be willing to stand for election to national parliament if encouraged by their party (response options "no", "yes, I would consider it" and "yes"). We argue that respondents who answered "yes" or "yes, I would consider" are aspirants. Hence, we are able to distinguish between rank-and-file party members, or the "eligible", and the aspirants (Lovenduski 2016).

The wording of this question enables us to conduct an appropriate test of the question of the step from eligible to aspirant since women tend to be more hesitant with their own ambitions than men and need more encouragement (from their party) to stand (Lawless and Fox 2010; Hinojosa 2012; Dittmar 2015). By including the term "if encouraged by your party", we (try to) overcome the potential gender biased demand (Verge 2015; Kenny and Verge 2016). Furthermore, we include those who are immediately willing to stand as well as those who are willing to consider.

The survey question does not show whether these aspirants choose to run; this is *ex ante* uncertain. The question concerns party members' considerations about standing for nomination/election, not post-hoc rationalizations about their decisions to run; after the formation of ambition but before the

decision to enter (cf. Maestas, Fulton, Maisel, and Stone 2006). Furthermore, it is hypothetical and does not include real demand-side actions. In sum, this analysis only partly responds to the call for opening up the "black box" of intra-party candidate nomination (Kenny and Verge 2016).

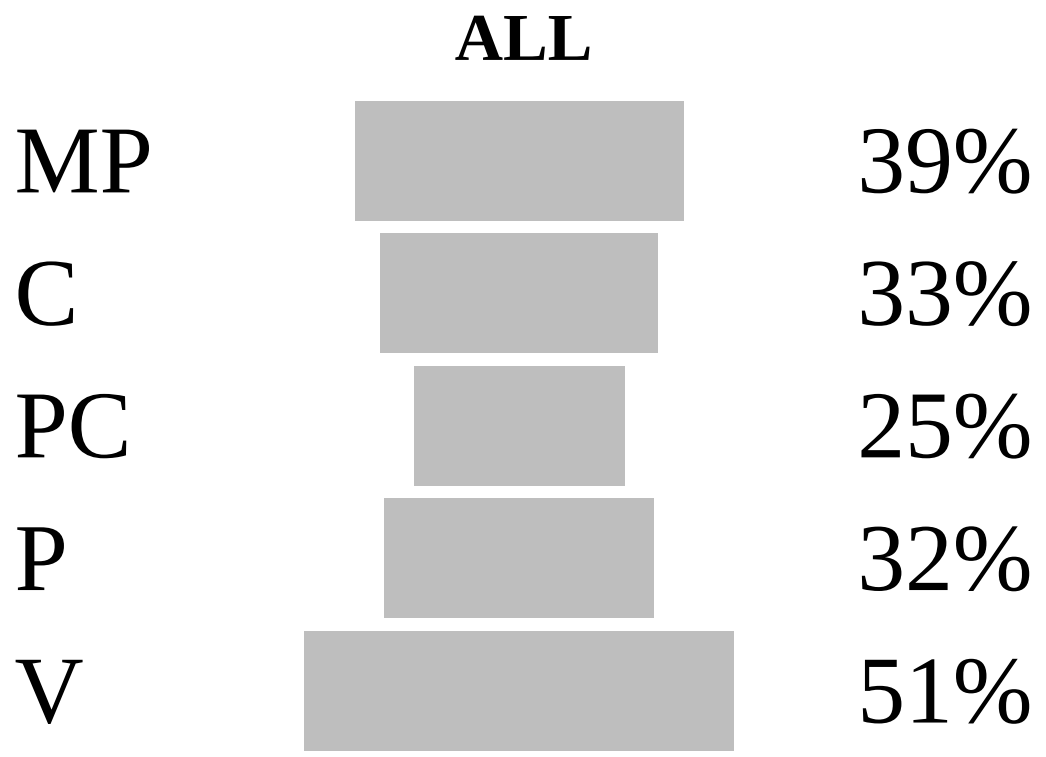
Results: The hourglass pattern

We find support for our proposed hourglass pattern of the recruitment ladder in the Danish case in Figure 1. As we move up the ladder of recruitment from voters (V) to party members (P), we find the expected decrease in the percentage of women (from 51 to 30 percent) as we do when we ask party members if they are willing to come forward as candidates, i.e., whether they are potential candidates (PC) (from 30 to 25 percent). Furthermore, the share of women candidates (C) is higher than the share of prospective women candidates (percentage of women up from 25 to 33). In addition, the election phase treats female candidates favorably, which means that there are relatively more women in parliament (MPs) than on the ballots (an increase from 33 to 39 percent). Consequently, the pattern looks like an hourglass.

Political parties vary, and aggregate numbers conceal variations among parties (Norris and Lovenduski 1995; Caul 1999; Crowder-Meyer 2013). We therefore perform the same calculations split by party to strengthen our initial finding. Figure 2 shows women's representation in each of the eight parties. The finding of an hourglass pattern in the Danish case is very robust and is more or less reproduced for all parties. The lower part of the hourglass holds for all parties, even if the difference between the share of women among party members and aspirants is small in the main party right of center, the Liberals (V). The top levels provide exceptions to the hourglass. The hourglass holds for leftwing Socialist People's Party (SF), the Social Liberals (RV), Liberals (V) and rightwing Liberal Alliance (LA), where women are more likely to get elected than men. Women are less likely to get elected in the Danish People's Party (DF), and the share is about even in leftwing Red-Green Alliance (EL), Social Democrats (S) and Conservatives (K). Both leftwing parties, Red-Green Alliance (EL) and Socialist Peoples' Party (SF), have larger shares of women among party members and potential candidates, and they only exercise limited positive discrimination of women among candidates. The opposite is the case for the two right-of-center parties, Conservatives (K) and Liberal Alliance (LA), which have very small shares of women among members and potential candidates, and a substantive increase at the level of candidates.

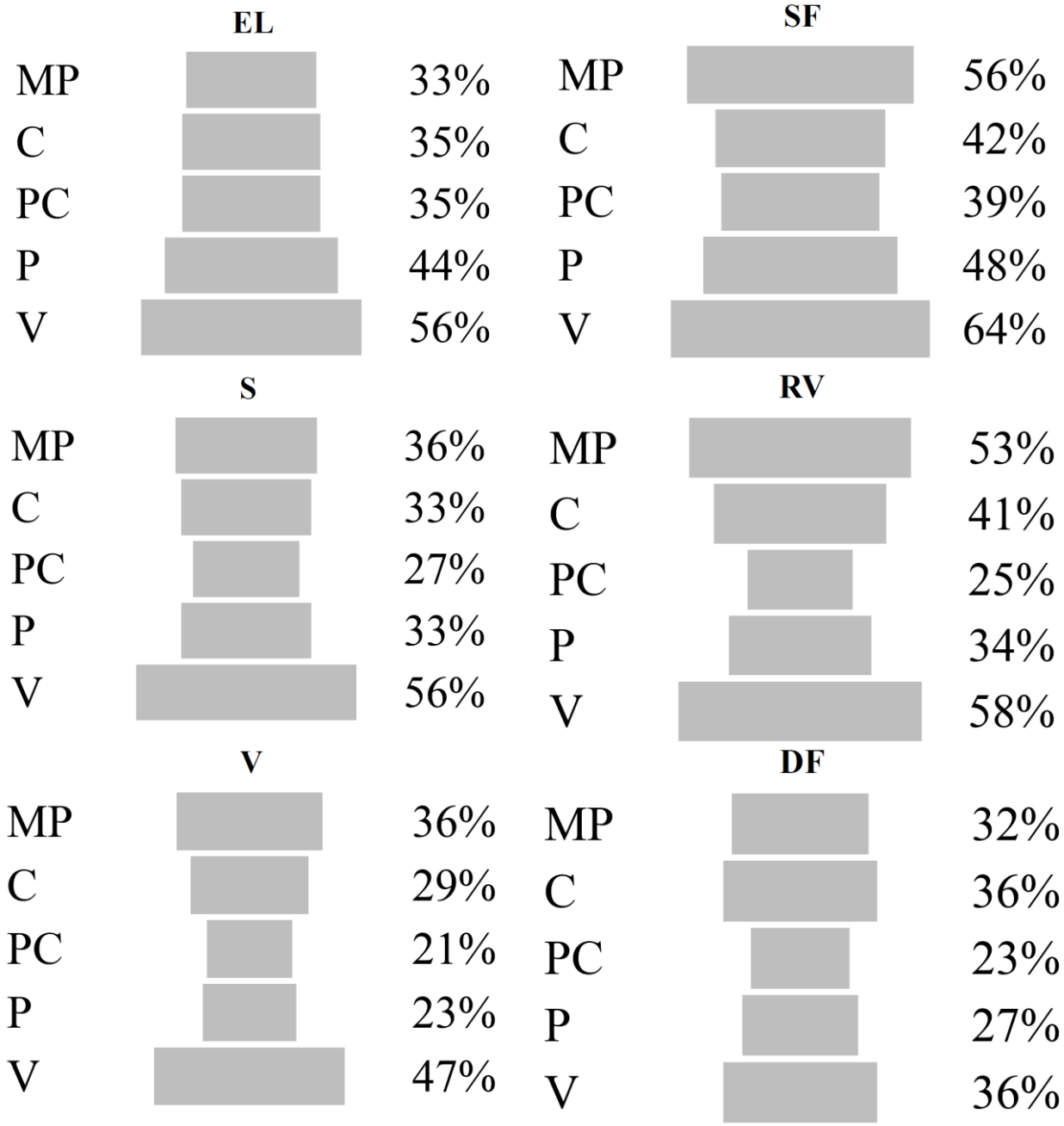
Hence, we see some indication of the mechanism that the selectorates in these parties compensate for a gender-skewed pipeline. In all parties, women make up the smallest share at the level of aspirants; this is the critical juncture.

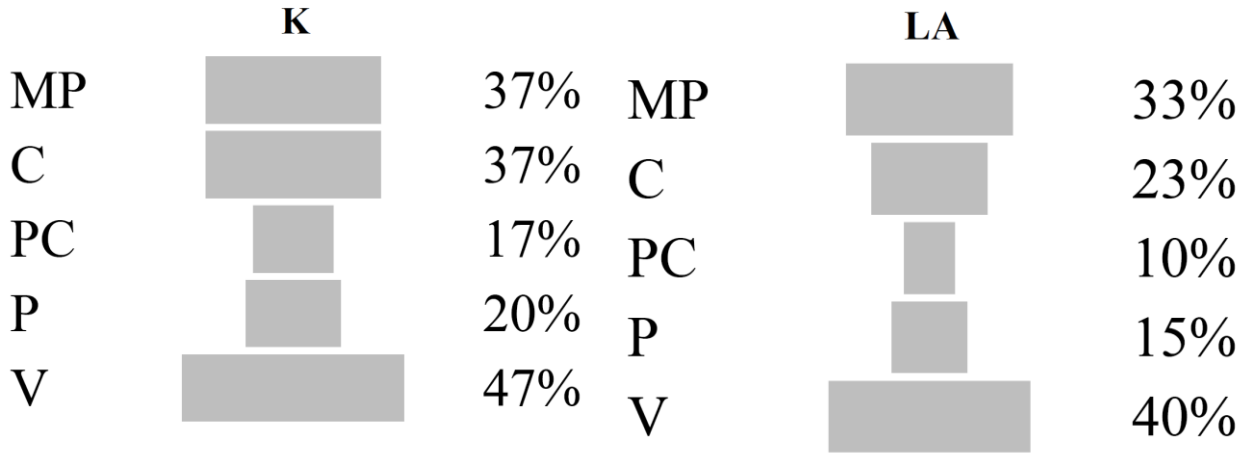
Figure 1. Women's representation across different levels on the ladder of recruitment (the length of each bar equals the percentage of women in the group) in Denmark 2012.



Note: Voters (V), party members (P), potential candidates (PC), candidates (C), and members of parliament (MP) across all Danish parties.

Figure 2. Women's representation across different levels on the ladder of recruitment (the length of each bar equals the percentage of women in the group) in Denmark 2012 split by party.





Sources: Ministry of the Interior on candidates and elected MPs at the 2011 general election, The Danish Party Member Survey 2012 on members and potential candidates (Kosiara-Pedersen & Hansen 2012) and National Election Studies 2011 on voters (Stubager et al. 2013).

Note: Voters (V), party members (P), potential candidates (PC), candidates (C), and members of parliament (MP) in Red-Green Alliance (EL), Socialist People's Party (SF), Social Democrats (S), the Social Liberals (RV), Liberals (V), Conservatives (K), Liberal Alliance (LA), and Danish People's Party (DF).

The hourglass pattern is supported by analyses based on the party member survey among seven Danish parties in 2000 (see Appendix, Figure A1; Kjaer and Pedersen 2004) both at the aggregate and party levels. Hence, we find support for the hourglass pattern in the Danish case at the aggregate level, across parties, and over time. There is a gender gap at all levels above the electorate, that is, an underrepresentation of women, but the step with the lowest share of women is that of the aspirants. In order to explore whether it is a gender or distribution effect, we conduct an analysis of party members' readiness to stand for election.

Table 1 reports the average marginal effects of logistic regression analyses explaining party members' readiness to stand or consider standing for national election. Model 1 only includes gender, and as indicated in Figures 2 and 3, women are less likely to be willing to stand or consider standing for election, even among party members. The main question here is whether the gender gap in recruitment potential is an effect of gender or of other factors. The relative decrease in women surviving this important phase in the recruitment process could be due to a distribution effect where women systematically possess fewer characteristics that are important in the

recruitment game. In order to test whether the largest overrepresentation of men in the center of the hourglass model is a gender effect, we include various control variables that have been shown to explain political recruitment (for the operationalization of all variables, see Appendix Table A3). In model 2, we control for the sociodemographic variables age, education and income (Lawless and Fox 2010). We include age due to the life cycle of political engagement. Education affects political ambition since some education and professions prepare more for political office (Lawless and Fox 2010). Longer education is an advantage as indicated by the intellectual professionalization of parliamentarians (Putnam 1976). We also take family obligations into account. Family-related caregiving responsibilities take time and resources and may limit political ambitions. While some studies find that familial responsibilities do not matter (Fox and Lawless 2014), others find that they do (Fulton et al. 2006; Galais et al. 2016). In model 3, we control for elected office and party office as indicators of party members' activism, "apprenticeship" in their party, or political and organizational experience (Lawless and Fox 2010; Schwindt-Bayer 2011; Niven 1998, 37). Political activism and experience in a party increase readiness to stand for election. Intra-party office is not necessarily a stepping-stone to elected office (Maestas, Fulton, Maisel, and Stone 2006) but rather a (gendered) resource (Verge and Claveria 2016). In model 4, we include two indicators of self-perceived political competence: political interest and self-perceived political competence (Lawless and Fox 2010).

Models 2-4 show that most of these "usual" explanations for recruitment potential hold. The important result here is that no matter which of the three groups of control variables we include, women are statistically significantly less likely to say that they would stand or consider standing for election if encouraged by their party. The same goes for Model 5, where we include all variables, and Model 6, which also includes dummies for each party (not shown). These final models allow us to conclude that female party members are less likely than male party members to be willing to stand or consider standing for election when encouraged by their party. Age, college/university degree, income, political interest, political self-confidence (internal efficacy), holding party office and incumbency affect party members' readiness to stand or at least consider standing for election if encouraged by their party. We thus have support for the "usual suspects" explaining political recruitment. Most importantly, however, the impact of gender remains even after control for these explanations. The impact of gender is substantial and significant across all models in Table 1. The gender gap is not due to a distribution effect where women systematically possess fewer of these characteristics. This result is supported at the party level (see Appendix, Table A4), and at both the

aggregate and the party level in 2000 (see Appendix, Table A5 and Table A6). At the aggregate level, the same pattern is found whether we analyze respondents who answered "yes" or not, and "yes, I would consider" or not, respectively (see Appendix, Table A7).

Table 1. Explaining recruitment model (average marginal effects).

	(1) Bivariate		(2)		(3)		(4)		(5)		(6)		(7)	
Woman	-0.076	***	-0.076	***	-0.113	***	-0.073	***	-0.055	***	-0.088	***	-0.082	***
	(0.008)		(0.008)		(0.007)		(0.008)		(0.008)		(0.007)		(0.007)	
Age	-0.009	***			-0.010	***					-0.010	***	-0.010	***
	(0.000)				(0.000)						(0.000)		(0.000)	
College degree	0.030	***			0.043	***					0.027	***	0.033	***
	(0.008)				(0.008)						(0.008)		(0.008)	
Income	0.0022				0.036	***					0.028	***	0.027	***
	(0.007)				(0.006)						(0.006)		(0.006)	
Family	0.188	***			0.009						0.017		0.015	
	(0.010)				(0.010)						(0.010)		(0.010)	
Elected office	0.159	***					0.136	***			0.097	***	0.093	***
	(0.015)						(0.016)				(0.014)		(0.014)	
Party office	0.086	***					0.065	***			0.042	***	0.041	***
	(0.009)						(0.009)				(0.009)		(0.009)	
Political efficacy	0.484	***							0.303	***	0.198	***	0.204	***
	(0.022)								(0.024)		(0.022)		(0.022)	
Political interest	0.056	***							0.044	***	0.041	***	0.041	***
	(0.002)								(0.003)		(0.002)		(0.002)	
Control for party													+	
n	14,151		14,151		14,151		14,151		14,151		14,151		14,151	
pseudo R^2	-		0.006		0.126		0.014		0.052		0.172		0.177	
AIC	-		16372.4		14395.3		16231.0		15607.7		13645.6		13576.4	

Note: Standard errors in parentheses. * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$. All bivariate correlations between each characteristic and readiness to stand for election have the expected sign and are statistically significant (not shown), except income.

Conclusion

Scandinavian countries provide "an example of an equalitarian ideology realized through politics to result in definite increases in women's status" (Paxton 1997, 460). However, even within this context, gender affects political recruitment. We demonstrate that even in Denmark, the recruitment process continues to be highly gendered. Women are systematically deselected at some of the critical junctions as they move up the ladder of recruitment. Women's survival rates in terms of moving towards the group of party members who are willing to run for a parliamentary seat are far from impressive. Recently, "getting to Denmark" has become a fashionable catch-phrase in democratic discussions (Fukuyama 2014), but this article demonstrates that even in Denmark, gender parity regarding women's numerical representation is not within reach. However, there can still be good reasons to pay attention to Denmark and the Danish case of political recruitment.

The main finding of this article is that the descriptive underrepresentation of women in the Danish parliament is a result of the earlier and not the later phases of the political recruitment process. In relative terms, women are losing at the beginning of the recruitment process but they are making up for some of the loss towards the end of the process. This is quite surprising since the traditional conception of the gendered effect of moving upwards on the ladder of recruitment is that women are continuously deselected and that women's relative presence declines steadily, leaving a "the higher, the fewer" outcome, often depicted as a pyramidal pattern. In Denmark, the combination of women's relative loss at the lower steps of the ladder and their relative gain on the higher steps produces what we denote an hourglass pattern of women's representation. This demonstrated pattern is very robust. The hourglass pattern is found at the aggregate level as well as for each political party. Furthermore, the pattern is consistent across parties and over time, and the pattern based on 2012 data is found also on data from three electoral cycles ago (2000).

When we evaluate positive discrimination towards women in the nomination and electoral phases, it is important to note that Denmark is a non-quota country – no reserved seats or internal party rules helping female candidates. The strong norms on gender equality and a passion for gender equality in Denmark seem to increase women's political representation on par with the quota instrument applied elsewhere, since Danes nominate relatively many women and vote for them on Election Day. This said, it is also important to recall that the pyramid has not been turned completely around. The hourglass pattern materializes because a negative gender gap (from the women's perspective) still exists in the earlier phases. Gender equality aside, women join political parties less often than

men, and even among politically committed and interested party members, women are less inclined than men to (consider) standing for election if encouraged by their party. The difference persists when we control for essential political resources such as age, education, incumbency and internal efficacy. The hourglass pattern is found in a context where gender parity is on the electorate's agenda but where both political ambitions and party organizations remain more traditionally gendered (Verge 2015; Lovenduski 2016). We can only speculate if these opposite effects emerge because the gender differences at the lower rungs of the ladder of recruitment are less transparent and harder for outsiders to observe compared to the upper rungs where the public more easily can follow how many women end up on the ballot and in parliaments.

The implications of the demonstrated hourglass patterns are twofold. For researchers, the next step should be – besides not taken the pyramidal pattern for granted – to examine whether the hourglass pattern is a special Danish phenomenon or whether the underlying mechanisms travel. Are there, for instance, differences in which patterns emerge in countries characterized by a high level of gender equality (high labor-market participation rate among women, gender-equal policies etc.) and in countries with a more traditional, gendered division of labor? At the party level, a comparative study would allow assessments of the impact of party ideology and policies as well as membership composition and organization. In particular, is the hourglass pattern a result of gender action plans aiming for gender equality (Verge 2018) and/or the result of a strategy to maximize votes? Comparative studies on the patterns of women's representation will also enhance our understanding of the emergence of the different patterns and ultimately help us identify the causal mechanism behind the identified (but not, yet, explained) hourglass pattern.

For advocates of more equal gender representation in elected politics, the finding that women tend to drop out in the beginning of the recruitment process requires a reinforced focus on the earlier phases where prospective candidates become involved by joining a party and where some of them develop a taste for political office. In Denmark, at least, the analysis demonstrates that the inner life of the political parties is somewhat key to altering the gender composition of the pool of potential candidates. The pattern is consistent across parties and therefore each party is actually dealing with the same problems if it tries to increase women's chances of surviving the early phases of the recruitment process. If political parties in countries with an hourglass pattern, such as Denmark, want to promote further parliamentary representation of women, they should focus on membership

recruitment and on mobilizing, educating and encouraging potential female aspirants among the recruited members.

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Appendix

The Danish party member survey 2012

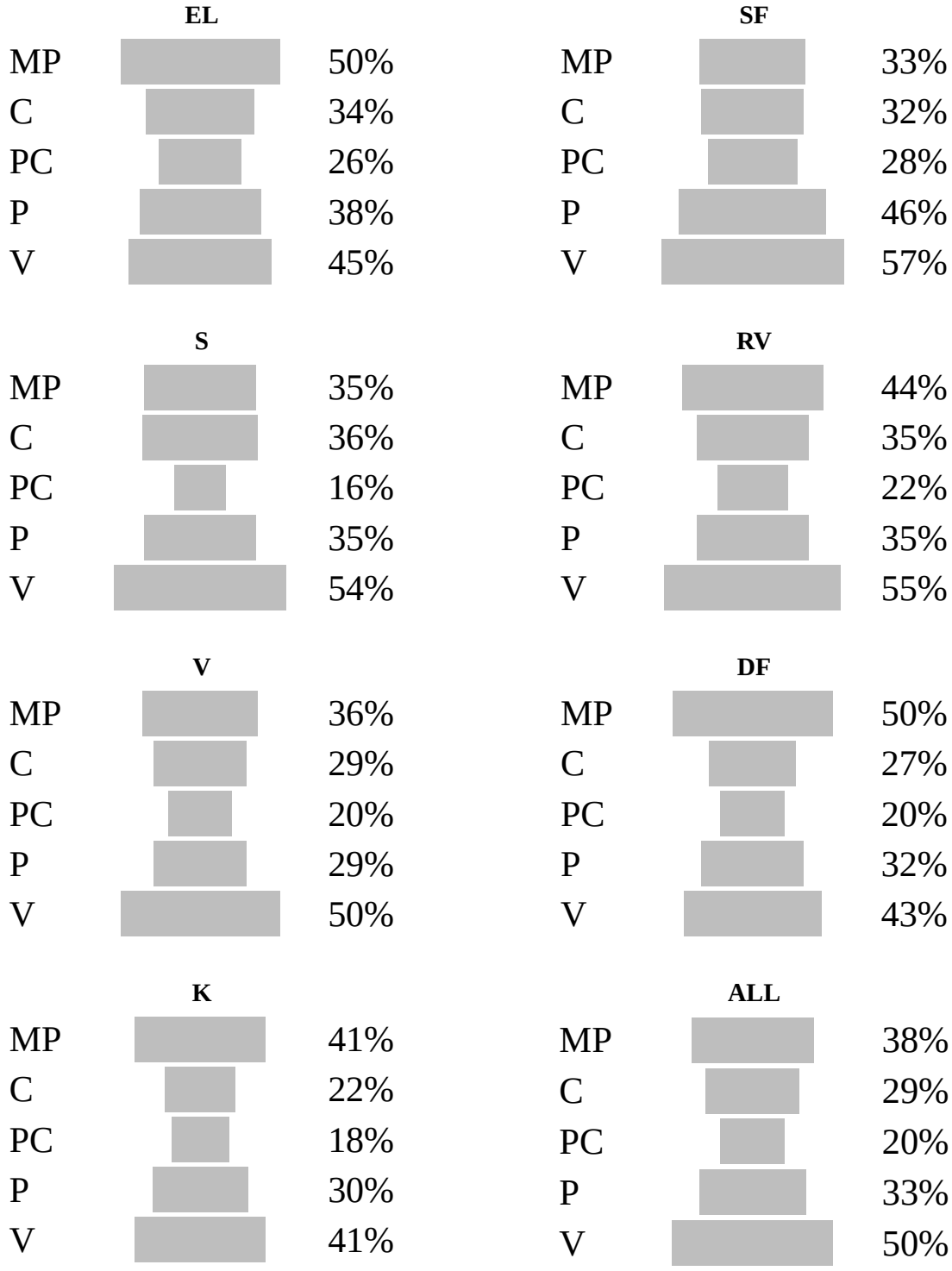
The large Danish party member online survey was conducted in April 2012 among party members from all nine Danish parties standing for the general election in September 2011. These parties are, in the order of their position on the traditional left-right dimension: Red-Green Alliance (EL), Socialist People's Party (SF), Social Democrats (S), Social Liberals (RV), The Christian democrats (KD), Liberals (V), Danish People's Party (DF), Conservatives People's Party (KF), and Liberal Alliance (LA). All party members for whom the parties have email addresses were surveyed; however, in the two major parties, the Liberals and the Social Democrats, a random sample of 9,000 was drawn from their email lists. A total of 16,871 members responded to all questions (response rate 26.8 percent), and 22,415 responded to some (response rate 36.0 percent). The latter varies among parties with 7-8 percent among members of Liberal Alliance and the Social Liberals, and 39-49 percent among the other seven parties. The Christian Democrats were not elected to parliament and are excluded from the analyses.

Since the survey was conducted among party members for whom parties have a valid email address, we could expect an over-representation of active (including office-holders) and newer members. However, a comparison with a postal party member survey conducted in 2000 shows identical shares of officeholders, and other research on the basis of this survey shows that there is great variation among the respondents (<<omitted in this version>>). Furthermore, even though survey respondents likely differ from the population of party members as a whole, there is no reason to believe that the response bias is gendered. Even if there is a gender difference in response rate, this may only have an impact on the descriptive statistics, not on the explanation of party members' readiness to stand for election. Table A1 shows the variation among the parties included in this analysis; the Danish case provides a large number of parties varying in age, membership size, electoral size and ideological placement.

The Danish party member survey 2000

Party member mail back survey of all parliamentarian parties conducted in 2000-1. Random samples of 1.000 from Liberals (V), Social Democrats (SD) and Conservatives (KF), 800 from the remaining six parties: Red-Green Alliance (EL), Socialist People's Party (SF), Social Liberals (RV), Christian democrats (KD), Center Democrats and Danish People's Party (DF). Response rate was 68,2 % overall varying from 60 % to 79,9 % across the parties. Total responses: 5.266. For more, see Pedersen et al. (2004) and Kosiara-Pedersen (2015).

Figure A1. Women's representation across different levels on the ladder of recruitment (the length of each bar equals the percentage of women in the group) in Denmark 2000 split by party.



Sources: Ministry of the Interior on candidates and elected MPs at the 2001 general election, The Danish Party Member Survey 2000 on members and potential candidates, National Election Studies 2011 on voters (Andersen & Andersen, 2003: 190). See also Kjaer & Pedersen (2004: 121).

Note: Voters (V), party members (P), potential candidates (PC), candidates (C), and members of parliament (MP) in Red-Green Alliance (EL), Socialist People's Party (SF), Social Democrats (S), the Social Liberals (RV), Liberals (V), Conservatives (K), Liberal Alliance (LA), and Danish People's Party (DF).

Table A1. Basic characteristics of the included parties.

	EL	SF	SD	RV	V	DF	K	LA
Established year	1989	1959	1871	1905	1870	1996	1915	2007
Membership figure (2012)	8,018	15,108	45,000	9,116	44,361	10,080	12,698	6,495
M/V	3.4	4.6	5.1	2.7	4.7	2.3	7.3	3.7
Electoral size 2011 (pct.)	6.7	9.2	24.8	9.5	26.7	12.3	4.9	5.0
Left-right placement (0-10)	1.8 (1.6)	3.0 (1.3)	4.2 (1.8)	5.6 (1.3)	8.1 (1.8)	8.2 (2.5)	8.3 (1.4)	9.0 (1.5)

Note: Membership figures provided by the parties themselves. M/V = member/voter ratio. Electoral size: Share of votes at the general election. Left-right placement based on mean party members' self-placement on 0-10 scale (and standard deviation). Red-Green Alliance (EL), Socialist People's Party (SF), Social Democrats (S), the Social Liberals (RV), Liberals (V), Conservatives (K), Liberal Alliance (LA), and Danish People's Party (DF).

Table A2. Gender presence and recruitment potential (percentages).

	EL	SF	S	RV	V	DF	K	LA	All
Party members									
Men	56	52	67	66	77	73	80	85	70
Women	44	48	33	34	23	26	20	15	30
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Men's recruitment potential									
Yes	19	15	11	16	10	20	13	25	13
Yes, would consider	20	17	10	23	13	15	17	27	15
No	61	68	79	61	77	65	70	48	72
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Women's recruitment potential									
Yes	10	7	7	9	10	16	11	13	9
Yes, would consider	17	15	9	16	11	13	13	20	12
No	73	78	84	75	79	71	76	67	79
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
n	2,284	3,262	2,559	424	2,155	990	2,176	301	14,151

Note: 'All' is weighted so that it provides a picture of all Danish party members, controlling for differences in response rates. Red-Green Alliance (EL), Socialist People's Party (SF), Social Democrats (S), the Social Liberals (RV), Liberals (V), Conservatives (K), Liberal Alliance (LA), and Danish People's Party (DF).

Table A3. Operationalization of variables.

Recruitment potential (0-1)	1: "Yes" or "Yes, I would consider" to the question: "Would you stand for election to national parliament if encouraged by your party?"
	0: "No" to the question: "Would you stand for election to national parliament if encouraged by your party?"
Gender	Self-placement in 'man' or 'woman'
Age	In years
Education (0-1)	College degree or not
Income	Log of income
Family responsibilities (0-1)	2012: At least one child aged 0-5 in the household or not
	2000: Not included
Party office (0-1)	Currently holding an office within the party at any level or not
Elected office (0-1)	Currently holding an elected office at either the municipal, regional, or parliamentary level or not
Political interest (0-10)	2012: Self-placement on 0-10 scale (from no to high)
	2000: Not included
Political efficacy (0-4)	2012: Index based on four questions: "People like me are qualified to participate in the political debate", "In general, I actually do not believe it is hard to take a stand on political issues", "Sometimes politics is so complicated that people like me don't understand", and "When politicians debate economic politics, I only understand a small part of the debate". The more in agreement with the first two statements, and the more in disagreement with the latter two statements, the more political efficacy. Scaled 0-4. The higher the more efficacy.
	2000: Index (0-4) based on agreement with the statement: "Sometimes politics is so complicated that people like me don't understand". The more disagreement, the more political efficacy, the higher the score.

Table A4. Explaining recruitment potential per party (average marginal effects).

	EL		SF		SD		RV		V		DF		KF		LA	
Woman	-0.104	***	-0.088	***	-0.064	***	-0.114	**	-0.058	**	-0.067	*	-0.062	**	-0.137	
	(0.019)		(0.015)		(0.015)		(0.040)		(0.020)		(0.031)		(0.0222)		(0.078)	
Age	-0.008	***	-0.009	***	-0.010	***	-0.016	***	-0.010	***	-0.011	***	-0.010	***	-0.006	*
	(0.001)		(0.001)		(0.000)		(0.001)		(0.001)		(0.001)		(0.001)		(0.003)	
College education	0.010		0.006		0.050	***	0.050		0.029		0.0514		0.011		0.157	*
	(0.022)		(0.018)		(0.015)		(0.062)		(0.018)		(0.027)		(0.021)		(0.065)	
Income	0.018		0.015		0.017		0.038		0.054	**	0.030		0.017		-0.037	
	(0.015)		(0.013)		(0.015)		(0.044)		(0.018)		(0.027)		(0.019)		(0.059)	
Family	0.027		0.0382		0.004		-0.129	**	0.010		-0.055		0.033		0.104	
	(0.028)		(0.021)		(0.023)		(0.050)		(0.025)		(0.048)		(0.025)		(0.068)	
Elected office	0.282	***	0.103	***	0.061	*	0.452	*	0.065	*	0.135	**	0.043		0	
	(0.085)		(0.027)		(0.026)		(0.197)		(0.033)		(0.047)		(0.037)		(.)	
Party office	0.128	***	0.065	***	-0.000		0.077		-0.006		0.102	**	-0.014		0.100	
	(0.027)		(0.019)		(0.017)		(0.052)		(0.020)		(0.034)		(0.021)		(0.075)	
Political efficacy	0.132	*	0.205	***	0.153	***	0.045		0.323	***	0.076		0.292	***	0.242	
	(0.060)		(0.046)		(0.044)		(0.133)		(0.057)		(0.083)		(0.060)		(0.197)	
Political interest	0.065	***	0.039	***	0.0297	***	0.042	**	0.024	***	0.052	***	0.040	***	0.042	
	(0.007)		(0.005)		(0.005)		(0.014)		(0.006)		(0.008)		(0.007)		(0.022)	
n	2,284		3,262		2,559		424		2,155		990		2,176		297	
pseudo R^2	0.128		0.157		0.223		0.266		0.199		0.194		0.185		0.075	
AIC	2535.8		3205.4		1935.8		414.7		1861.3		1020.1		2138.8		398.0	

Note: Standard errors in parentheses * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$. Among members with elected office (four respondents) there is no variation in the dependent variable, whereby it is excluded. The same observations are included but the total is 14,147 instead of 14,151. Red-Green Alliance (EL), Socialist People's Party (SF), Social Democrats (S), the Social Liberals (RV), Liberals (V), Conservatives (K), Liberal Alliance (LA), and Danish People's Party (DF).

Table A5. Explaining recruitment potential, 2000 (average marginal effects).

	(1) Bivariate		(2)		(3)		(4)		(5)		(6)		(7)	
Woman	-0.133	***	-0.133	***	-0.140	***	-0.126	***	-0.118	***	-0.118	***	-0.110	***
	(0.018)		(0.018)		(0.017)		(0.018)		(0.018)		(0.017)		(0.016)	
Age	-0.009	***			-0.009	***					-0.008	***	-0.008	***
	(0.001)				(0.001)						(0.001)		(0.001)	
College education	0.076	***			0.058	**					0.020		0.028	
	(0.019)				(0.018)						(0.018)		(0.018)	
Income	-0.007				-0.007						-0.017		-0.0037	
	(0.018)				(0.017)						(0.016)		(0.016)	
Elected office	0.220	***					0.159	***			0.172	***	0.181	***
	(0.038)						(0.040)				(0.037)		(0.036)	
Party office	0.102	***					0.074	***			0.061	***	0.063	***
	(0.017)						(0.018)				(0.017)		(0.016)	
Political efficacy	0.071	***							0.067	***	0.047	***	0.045	***
	(0.007)								(0.007)		(0.007)		(0.007)	
Control for party													+	
n	2,680		2,680		2,680		2,680		2,680		2,680		2,680	
pseudo R^2	-		0.021		0.115		0.037		0.056		0.153		0.190	
AIC	-		2728.5		2471.6		2687.3		2630.8		2372.7		2281.9	

Note: Standard errors in parentheses. * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$

Table A6. Explaining recruitment potential per party, 2000 (average marginal effects).

	EL		SF		SD		RV		V		DF		KF	
Woman	-0.141	***	-0.123	**	-0.079	*	-0.098	*	-0.141	*	-0.104		-0.058	
	(0.042)		(0.041)		(0.036)		(0.043)		(0.056)		(0.075)		(0.045)	
Age	-0.010	***	-0.007	***	-0.005	***	-0.012	***	-0.008	***	-0.009	***	-0.009	***
	(0.002)		(0.002)		(0.001)		(0.001)		(0.002)		(0.002)		(0.001)	
College educaiton	0.037		0.012		0.004		0.099		0.135	**	0.030		-0.031	
	(0.057)		(0.057)		(0.034)		(0.074)		(0.051)		(0.063)		(0.047)	
Income	-0.022		-0.091		-0.020		0.029		0.005		0.095		0.021	
	(0.038)		(0.049)		(0.035)		(0.041)		(0.066)		(0.068)		(0.052)	
Elected office	0.136		0.303	***	0.109		0.319	**	0.142		0		0.143	
	(0.138)		(0.090)		(0.064)		(0.106)		(0.108)		(.)		(0.084)	
Party office	0.142	**	0.105	*	-0.002		-0.029		0.073		0.163	*	0.008	
	(0.046)		(0.041)		(0.038)		(0.043)		(0.051)		(0.076)		(0.046)	
Political efficacy	0.034		0.073	***	0.063	***	0.022		0.026		0.055	*	0.014	
	(0.020)		(0.019)		(0.015)		(0.017)		(0.019)		(0.024)		(0.018)	
n	403		352		366		415		273		229		366	
pseudo R^2	0.124		0.195		0.236		0.211		0.203		0.131		0.181	
AIC	419.2		323.5		218.3		389.9		215.9		281.3		301.4	

Note: Standard errors in parentheses. * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$. Red-Green Alliance (EL), Socialist People's Party (SF), Social Democrats (S), the Social Liberals (RV), Liberals (V), Conservatives (K), Liberal Alliance (LA), and Danish People's Party (DF).

Table A7. Splitting the dependent variable, 2012 (average marginal effects).

	(1) "Yes"		(2) "Yes, I would consider"	
Woman	-0.053	***	-0.030	***
	(0.006)		(0.006)	
Age	-0.005	***	-0.005	***
	(0.000)		(0.000)	
College education	0.008		0.031	***
	(0.006)		(0.007)	
Income	0.0085		0.026	***
	(0.005)		(0.005)	
Family	0.015	*	-0.001	
	(0.007)		(0.008)	
Elected office	0.069	***	0.006	
	(0.010)		(0.013)	
Party office	0.033	***	0.004	
	(0.006)		(0.008)	
Political efficacy	0.107	***	0.100	***
	(0.018)		(0.019)	
Political interest	0.028	***	0.017	***
	(0.002)		(0.002)	
Control for party	+		+	
n	14,151		14,151	
pseudo R^2	0.139		0.090	
AIC	9051.0		10773.2	

Note: Standard errors in parentheses. * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$